

Educator Quality Update

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2008

NEWS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS AND ALTERNATE ROUTES

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Welcome Spring!

We are publishing our Educator Quality (EQ) newsletter in the spring this year in order to inform programs about the recent regulation changes, policy revisions, and other news pertinent to educator preparation.

The Educator Quality Team has completed its move from 120 State Street to our new location on 1311 U.S. 302, Berlin. We think you'll find that our new location features great meeting spaces and plenty of parking. Please note that our current telephone numbers and mailing address have not changed.

State Board Hosts Meetings on the Transformation of Vermont Schools

The State Board of Education (SBE) and Commissioner Richard Cate recently articulated their vision for the future of education in Vermont. The Vision document is the starting point for several public conversations that began with the October 16, 2007 State Board meeting at which students and parents participated in roundtable discussions on the future of education.

The EQ Team would like to thank in particular members of higher education who attended the February 19th Board meeting to participate in a discussion with the SBE, and the panel discussants at the March 18th meeting. Your feedback is invaluable as we begin this exciting work.

You can access more information on the Transformation at:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/future_of_education.html.

Institutional Portfolio Writing Cohorts

As part of our ongoing efforts to support programs undergoing ROPA reviews, we would like to extend an invitation to you to participate in an institutional writing workshop.

Our first workshop is scheduled for Friday, September 19th, from 9 to noon. We'll meet at the DOE in Berlin (our new location!). While our focus will be on institutions scheduled for visits in 2009 and 2010, anyone who is interested in beginning the self-study process is welcome to attend.

Please let Rebecca Otis know if you can attend at Rebecca.Otis@state.vt.us or via phone at 828-2444. You are welcome to extend this invitation to anyone else who may be involved in preparing for the ROPA review and/or in writing the institutional portfolio.

We look forward to this opportunity to learn more about your programs!

Save- the- Date!

By popular demand, the Vermont Council for Teacher Educators (VCTE) and the Department of Education (DOE) will be hosting a follow-up portfolio conference on October 24th. This will be a day of working sessions on implementing and scoring the revised Level I Licensure Portfolio. Liberal arts and science faculty are also invited. Location TBA.



Licensing Regulation Changes

April 1, 2008



The complete Regulations can be found on our web page at:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/regulations_endorsements.html

On April 1, 2008, three major types of revisions to the Educator Licensing Regulations took effect. These included: technical corrections to the 2003 regulations, 2) revisions to the Career and Technical Education endorsements, and 3) changes necessitated by Act 214. The following is a brief description of some of the changes:

Technical Corrections:

The Educator Licensing Regulations were extensively revised in September 2003. However, upon implementation, it became evident that in a number of places the language in the current regulations is not clear. This lack of clarity generates questions, appeals, and the need for an ever increasing number of Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) policies to clarify regulatory confusion.

Therefore, in consultation with the VSBPE, the EQ Team moved forward to try to rectify these ambiguities. This educator licensing regulation revision process has had two primary goals:

- To resolve outstanding problems created by or overlooked in the last round of regulation revisions
- To clarify confusion or inconsistencies in the language of certain sections of the regulations

In each case, the revisions address issues that have been brought to our attention by the field, including members of the VSBPE. These revisions are not intended to substantially change the requirements for initial licensure, relicensure, program approval, or the appeal process, as was the case in the last round.

Revisions to Sections Pertaining to Higher Education and Educator Preparation

5910 – The “or” was added to clarify that individuals may be going through a state-approved program for initial licensure or an additional endorsement. The language of the entire program approval section is currently directed toward the requirements for initial licensure. Throughout this section, changes have been made to clarify which requirements pertain to those seeking initial licensure versus additional endorsements only. The second section was added so that there is clarity and consistency in the language of the recommendation for licensure among VT’s approved educator preparation programs.

5911.2 – Clarifies that the Individual Student Portfolio and documentation of the initial licensure requirements (for example, student teaching and the 16 Principles) are only requirements for initial licensure candidates.

5922.1 – see 5911.2 above.

5922.4 – The language of this requirement was revised slightly to align it with the language of the parallel ROPA standard 3.01 that was recently revised.

5923.2 – Knowledge of how to teach reading was separated from the other knowledge requirements included in this statement in order to indicate each separate knowledge area more clearly.

5923.3 – see 5911.2 above.

Additional Act 214 Changes

5243 – 5246 – Clarifies that the VSBPE, not the State Board of Education, is now responsible for all aspects of regulations and policy related to educator licensure including educator testing.

5370 – Procedures for qualifying for a “Teaching Intern License” have been specified as required in Act 214.

5600 – Most of this section has been deleted since Act 214 outlines a new structure and responsibilities for the VSBPE.

5700 – Most of this section has been deleted since Act 214 outlines a new disciplinary process for educators.

5950 – Removes the appeal rights for institutions to the State Board of Education from an adverse action of the Standards Board.

Endorsement Changes

Henceforth, for clarity and to save paper, the printed copy regulations document will include the endorsement authorization statements but will not include the endorsement competencies. The endorsement competencies will be in a second stand-alone document which will be available by late May. Until that time, please continue to refer to the competencies in the 2003 (orange) regulations document and on the web.

1. **80 – The authorization statement for the Early Childhood Special Educator endorsement has been revised to read “birth through age 6” instead of age 3 through age 6. In addition, the authorization statement now states that the holder may provide educational services (i.e., teach) in a pre-K program in addition to providing special education services as specified in Act 62.**
2. **89 – The “Other” endorsement has been eliminated.**
3. **Authorization Statements for the Career and Technical Education endorsements have been revised. They have also been integrated into the “general” educator endorsements.**
4. **67, 68, and 80-85 – The authorization statements for all special education endorsements have been revised to clearly indicate that the holder may work in “any public education setting” including CTE centers.**
5. **16 – A Junior ROTC Instructor endorsement has been added as required under Act 214.**
6. **36 – The authorization statement for the Early Childhood Education endorsement now allows for birth to age 6, grades K-3, or birth through grade 3 authorizations, depending on the individual’s preparation.**

For a complete copy of the endorsement changes please see (to be posted late May):
http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/regulations_endorsements.html



INTERVIEW WITH CURTISS REED, JR., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ALANA

The ALANA Community Organization is a nonprofit, educational and advocacy organization dedicated to building inclusive and equitable communities. The EQ Team worked with ALANA to strengthen the ROPA diversity standard in the latest ROPA revision. Mary Beth McNulty, ROPA Consultant, sat down with Curtiss in January to learn more about his work and how ALANA might assist educator preparation programs.

Mary Beth—The ALANA vision statement expresses a desire that “individuals and institutions possess and apply the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior necessary to build and sustain inclusive and equitable Vermont communities.” Tell us a little more about your organization.

Curtiss - *We’re a Vermont registered, non-profit, non-partisan research, education and advocacy group. In a few words, we educate, cultivate, and advocate.*

Mary Beth - What are you working on right now?

Curtiss - *At the top of our agenda is to facilitate the process whereby state approved programs have a clear understanding of what the expectations are [for ROPA Program Approval Standard 5] and how to meet and exceed those expectations.*

Mary Beth - What got you first interested in ROPA?

Curtiss - *Our interest came about in 2001 when there was a dramatic spike in the number of harassment cases in the state. We asked ourselves why there was so much, and how much time were teachers spending teaching about harassment? A state-wide survey revealed that in 90% of the schools (that responded to the survey) nothing was being done. In 10% of the schools that were doing something about it, 15 minutes was the average amount of time spent on this. When we asked why is this, teachers said that they hadn’t learned about it in their programs. That’s how we became engaged in the discussion.*

Mary Beth - What advice can you offer programs who are working to meet Program Approval Standard 5?

Curtiss - *Give us a call!*

Mary Beth - How might programs use ALANA as a resource?

Curtiss - *Every school’s different. We can help them prepare for the [Full Program Review]. It’s about preparation. Schools are going into un-chartered territory. There is an opportunity for us to learn together. Let’s think about ways to be more skillful..*

ALANA Contact Information: 802-254-2972

Nobody Likes a Deadline!



The VSBPE appreciates the amount of work that institutions must do in order to produce their institutional portfolios and follow-up reports. Please know that both the Department and the VSBPE will work closely with institutions to establish reasonable timelines. In fairness to other institutions, we are asking that people adhere to these timelines.

The timely submission of reports provides the Department with the opportunity to offer formative feedback prior to a full-program review. Marilyn Richardson, Higher Education Liaison and Mary Beth McNulty can alert programs to any omissions in the report and anticipate questions the Review Team or VSBPE may have regarding a program.

While we understand extenuating circumstances may occur, a delay in submitting a report can result in a subsequent delay getting on the VSBPE's agenda.

Student Teaching Requirements for Candidates Seeking Multiple Initial Endorsements or Multi-Level Single Endorsements

In February the VSBPE approved revisions to the following policies: *Policy on Student Teaching and Practicum Requirements for Multiple Initial Endorsements* Code: SB/N11 and the *Policy on Student Teaching and Practicum Requirements for Multi-Level Single Endorsement* Code: SB/N12. The revisions are meant to provide further guidance for institutions regarding student teaching, practica, and other licensure requirements for candidates seeking multiple initial endorsements (e.g. music and elementary education etc.) and/or multi-level endorsements (e.g. art, physical education etc.). **The policy revisions may impact institutions where candidates complete a "split" student teaching experience.**

After much discussion the Higher Education Committee of the VSBPE confirmed its belief that a supervised, concentrated student teaching experience in an appropriate setting is a necessary component in the development of competent beginning educators. Regulation defines student teaching as "a minimum of twelve (12) consecutive weeks of supervised, concentrated field experience required for initial licensure, including student teaching, internship, or other concentrated field experience however named, in which the candidate shall gradually assume the full professional roles and responsibilities of an educator in the initial endorsement area sought (section 5150)." **The Board feels that candidates will best be able to take on the full professional role of the classroom teacher by completing their student teaching experience in a single setting.**

It is also important to note that programs must document that their candidates seeking a multi-level endorsement or multiple initial endorsements are meeting all the knowledge and performance standards and **additional requirements**, if any, for the grade levels of the licensure recommendation. **This may mean that one or more practica are required in addition to student teaching.**

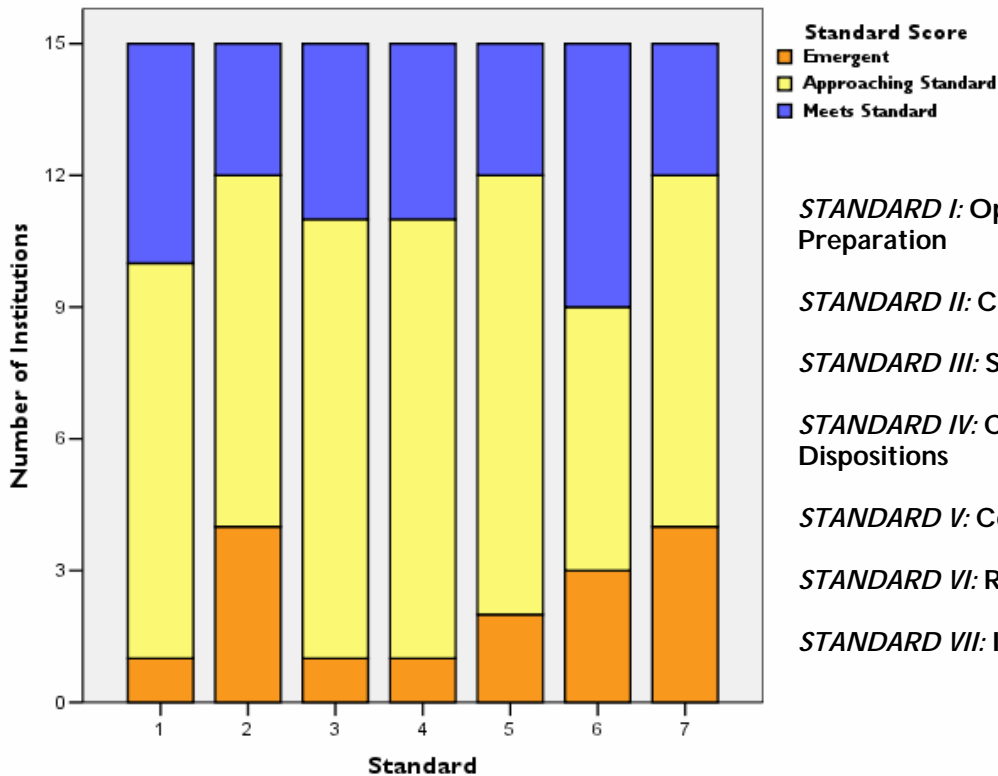
Approved programs that determine it is appropriate for **candidates seeking multiple initial endorsements** to divide the student teaching experience among different placements **must submit information** regarding the institution's rationale with supporting documentation **to the VSBPE for consideration**. Documentation should detail how candidates will be meeting the intention of the student teaching requirement through the split placements.

Approved programs that determine it is appropriate for **candidates seeking a multi-level endorsement** to divide the student teaching experience among different placements must have a **written policy** regarding the institution's rationale with supporting documentation. Documentation should detail how candidates will meet the intention of the student teaching requirement through the split placements. Such placements and the supporting documentation will be reviewed as part of the full-program ROPA review process.

A complete copy of the policy revisions may be found at http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_prostandards/vsbpe/policy_manual_031208.pdf. Please contact Mary Beth McNulty to submit information regarding split student teaching placements or with any questions or concerns.

Program Review Summary

The Educator Quality Team has been working this winter to analyze data from the last round of ROPA reviews in order to determine what data might be collected in the next round and how it might best be used. Below you can find an overview of how Vermont programs performed overall from 2002 to 2006. The Department will provide each institution with a copy of their individual data in preparation for your full program review.



Standard Score

- Emergent
- Approaching Standard
- Meets Standard

STANDARD I: Opportunities for Standards-based Preparation

STANDARD II: Collaboration with preK-12 Schools

STANDARD III: System of Assessment

STANDARD IV: Candidate Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

STANDARD V: Commitment to Diversity

STANDARD VI: Resources

STANDARD VII: Institutional and Program Renewal

Collecting Evidence for Full ROPA Reviews



As part of the ROPA review process, institutions are responsible for the creation and submission of an Institutional Portfolio. The Institutional Portfolio is the primary document through which the Review Team becomes acquainted with the institution, its programs, and candidates. The visit of the Review Team is meant to confirm the background information and evidence submitted in the Institutional Portfolio. Institutions should view the visit as an opportunity to provide supporting evidence across all programs for the team to confirm that the program approval standards are being met.

Programs are now being asked to keep samples of portfolios that they have judged "failing" as evidence of the program's portfolio assessment system in addition to "passing" portfolios. These may be portfolios from candidates who did not complete the program successfully or who were counseled out at any point in the program (even very early!). Programs might also consider showing the team qualifying portfolios that weren't successful. Given the developmental nature of the revised portfolio, copies of individual entries that were scored "failing" would qualify as meeting this requirement.

There is no expectation that programs will have very many samples of unsuccessful portfolios. Over a period of years, however, it is likely that programs will have a few portfolios that didn't meet standard for whatever reason.

Institutions might also consider keeping **copies of candidates' early drafts** that were judged "failing." Review teams can gather further information on a program's assessment system by seeing the nature of feedback that was given to candidates and how they were advised in revising their portfolios. **We recognize the challenge that collecting and maintaining feedback on drafts might present, especially with electronic portfolios.** Review Teams, however, have found this kind of evidence to be particularly helpful in getting a more complete picture of a program's assessment systems.

Please note that candidate work in advanced degree programs will also need to be documented through a portfolio or alternate assessment.

VCTE and DOE Present Licensure Portfolio at NEERO Conference

Members of VCTE and the DOE presented a symposium on April 10th in Hyannis, MA, entitled: *In Pursuit of Educator Quality: Collaboration and Critical Decisions in the Development of Vermont's Level 1 Licensure Portfolio, 1991-2007*. This symposium offered a comprehensive portrait of collaboration between higher education faculty and DOE personnel from the state of Vermont over a sixteen-year period from 1991-2007. Lessons learned from this collaboration suggest that differences and disagreements can inform decision making over time if the process fosters communication over competition.

Presenters included: Jonathan Miller-Lane, Middlebury College; Ben Williams, Goddard College; Regina Ritscher-Winters, Johnson State College; Heather McCollum, Union Institute and University; Marilyn Richardson, DOE; and Mary Beth McNulty, DOE.

Completing Portfolio Entry 2: Accommodating Students Identified as Having Special Needs

Entry 2 of the redesigned licensure portfolio offers candidates an important opportunity to begin learning about working with students with special needs. A number of institutions have expressed a concern with candidates' access to IEPs in order to complete the entry. While the Design Team does not specifically require that candidates read a student's IEP in order to complete the entry, clearly access to an IEP would greatly facilitate a candidate's reflection and analysis on the entry's questions.

Although legally candidates cannot access IEPs without the permission of the student's parent or guardian, it should not be difficult for programs to obtain this signed release. Problems may arise, according to Karin Edwards, Director of Student Support, when individual candidates approach classroom teachers or special educators to request access. It is important, she advises, that programs use their relationships with schools to create a mechanism whereby the special educators in the school identify families who are willing to support this important component of training new educators.

Julie Longchamp, Williston site coordinator and Design Team member, describes her school's process for sharing IEP information with candidates as follows: "We have a special educator go through an IEP as part of the seminar class. This allows them to understand the components of a student's plan, especially the accommodations, which the intern, as part of the classroom, needs to provide for the individual student."

"Our school also provides each team with an "IEP at a Glance" for students on each team. I look at this frequently throughout the year as I work with students."

Finally, Julie says that she thinks "entry 2 is critical for the preservice teacher. Legally, they need to understand and apply the information in the IEPs in order to meet the needs of the special learners."

Michael Hock, Department employee and special educator for over thirty years, thinks that programs should work with schools and special educators to assure that candidates who are directly serving students with special needs are knowledgeable of the IEP document. Schools must, he adds, balance their response to the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)* with their efforts to respond to the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*.

The Design Team wishes to emphasize that whatever challenges institutions confront as they create procedures to attain permission for access to IEPs, candidates' experience responding to the entry is an essential first step in working with students with special needs. "The more experience candidates get," Karin Edwards adds, "the better!"

“Sub-Endorsements” for Middle Grades and Foreign Language Candidates

The middle grades and foreign language endorsements are the only endorsements where it is possible for candidates to get “sub-endorsements.” Candidates will need to complete all of the requirements for their first sub-endorsement (e.g. testing, major or minor requirements, pedagogy requirements, etc.), but there are fewer requirements to receive a recommendation for subsequent sub-endorsements. Programs may recommend middle grades candidates for an additional sub-endorsement who have passed the required Praxis II test for the additional area and who have completed the required pedagogy coursework in the additional area. (To Be Posted: See the Middle Grades transcript review worksheet for the pedagogy requirements for each sub-endorsement at <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/forms.html>). Programs may recommend foreign language candidates for an additional sub-endorsement who have passed the required Praxis II test(s). (See the testing brochure for the test(s) required for each language, at http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/licensing/testing/testing_brochure_08.pdf).

Program Assistance

Assistance is available to institutions and programs throughout the ROPA process. Marilyn Richardson serves as the Department’s liaison to higher education institutions and is available to meet with programs as they prepare for a visit. You may also contact Marilyn for assistance in writing the Design Document for new program visits, the Institutional Portfolio, or the Two-Year Report. Marilyn can be reached at lilliaplantings@hotmail.com.



Contact Information

Vermont Department of Education homepage: www.education.vermont.gov

The licensing office accepts requests for information via e-mail to doe-licensinginfo@state.vt.us. E-mails must include a full name, complete mailing address, and telephone number with area code. The Licensing Office can also be reached at (802) 828-2445.

For information on Highly Qualified Teacher requirements please email doe-HQT@state.vt.us.

Please contact Mary Beth McNulty at MaryBeth.McNulty@state.vt.us or via phone at (802)828-5129 for information on the Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) process.

Important Web Links

ROPA Online! You may access the ROPA manual and Licensure Portfolio online at:
http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_prostandards/vsbpe/ropa_07.html

View the VSBPE Policy manual online at:
http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_prostandards/vsbpe/policy_manual_031208.pdf

Transcript Review Forms To Be Posted On-Line at:
<http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/forms.html>

View the Approved Program Grid online at:
http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/approved_teacher_prep.html#approved

The complete Licensing Regulations can be found on our web page at:
http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/regulations_endorsements.html

Educator Licensing Main Page:
<http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/maincert.html>

What did you think?

This newsletter was put together by the Department of Education’s Educator Quality Division. Please let us know what else we can do to make this an effective tool in communicating information regarding educator preparation programs. Please send feedback to MaryBeth.McNulty@state.vt.us. Thank you!



Mary Beth McNulty
Educator Quality Team
120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

